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ABSTRACT

Based on the latest research and theories this junior high school curriculum guide was prepared for teachers of language arts. Following a statement of the philosophy of the program, teaching objectives are stated for writing, literature, and related skill areas. Other sections include a scope and sequence chart, evaluation and testing components, instructional methods, and a list of recommended textbooks and materials. A bibliography of resources is also included. (HTH)

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JUNIOR HIGH CURRICULUM GUIDE TO LANGUAGE ARTS

of the

MEHLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

PJERKLE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

OAKVILLE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

WASHINGTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM FOR THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Developed by the teaching staffs and Curriculum Office of the
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STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The five primary components of the Language Arts Program in the Mehlville School District are reading, writing, listening, speaking, and study skills. The goal of the Junior High Curriculum Guide to Language Arts is to develop a comprehensive program that synthesizes all areas of language arts so that students may see the close relationship of these areas.

The Mehlville School District affirms the value of writing. In 1980-81 the junior highs placed a new emphasis on writing by initiating annual writing assessment, by adopting a composition textbook program, and by training staff in recent research and methodology. Their aim was to place primary stress on writing and to integrate the teaching of grammar into the writing program.

This Curriculum Guide reflects the junior high philosophy of the importance of writing and applied grammar. Grammar is viewed by the staff as a flexible description of our language, not as a static prescription that makes language possible. Excessive concern for mechanical correctness can stifle students' desire to express themselves and can inhibit writing growth. The junior highs ascribe to the importance and value of correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, capitalization, and legible handwriting. However, if the mechanical aspects of composition are stressed above all else, students are likely to be more concerned with these aspects of the paper than with the content and cogency of their writing. In addition, if the focus of instruction is on identifying and labeling rather than on composing language, that is what students will learn. Students do not learn composing skills by correcting errors in workbooks and filling-in-the-blanks. Students learn to write by writing.

Just as the study of grammar cannot function in a vacuum, writing cannot be fully developed unless integrated with the other areas of communication. Growth in effective communication depends on the connections among speaking, listening, writing, and reading. A child first communicates through oral verbalization, listening to those around him and imitating them until meaning is associated. As he gains proficiency in speaking skills, the child begins to understand that not all information can be communicated orally. Reading and writing become important and are learned simultaneously. In order to read words, he must know letters; to learn letters he must develop basic handwriting skills. The child then begins to put on paper those ideas he used to communicate only through speech. At this stage of the child's development, the four areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening are completely interwoven.

The child intuitively understands this interrelatedness. At the junior high level, teachers begin to bring this intuitive understanding to the level of consciousness. The reading skills taught at the elementary

level are more fully developed and integrated as the child begins a more advanced study of literature. Reading and writing are the bases of literature; literature is a source of ideas and models of writing. Both promote understanding, questioning, and synthesizing ideas. Speaking and listening enhance these critical thinking skills. Students may be stronger in one form of communication, but without understanding that each area affects the others, students will not gain the proficiency needed to function in our complex society.

THE PURPOSE OF INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Precisely stated instructional objectives work as a real advantage to the classroom teacher. Well-defined objectives help clarify the desired result of instruction to the teacher and allow the students, therefore, to be instructed more efficiently. Itemized objectives enable the teacher to use many sources of information. The teacher is not bound to "the textbook" but can use a variety of print and non-print resources which support the objective. Furthermore, when learning tasks are clearly defined, the teacher is aided in developing evaluative procedures and in giving clearer, more specific feedback to students and their parents.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR GRADE 7 AND GRADE 8

(An asterisk marks those new objectives introduced into the curriculum at the eighth-grade level.)

I. OBJECTIVES FOR WRITING AND APPLIED GRAMMAR

Students will engage in prewriting activities:

1. Develop awareness of the creative process--seeing, selecting, telling;
2. Strengthen powers of observation;
3. Generate ideas for writing;
4. Select and narrow topics;
5. Choose significant details;
6. Identify intended audience;
7. Select a point of view;
*8. Use associative or lateral thinking as applied to writing.

Students will demonstrate knowledge of paragraph construction:

1. Develop topic sentences in beginning, middle, and end positions;
2. Use appropriate methods of development;
3. Apply appropriate transitional devices to establish coherence;
4. Use appropriate organizational patterns;
5. Relate all sentences to the topic for paragraph unity;
6. Use indentation to signal the beginning of a paragraph;
7. Recognize the special nature of paragraphs in dialogues and newspapers;
*8. Develop clincher sentences to summarize longer writings;
*9. Apply chain, coordinate, and subordinate paragraph patterns.

Students will exhibit fluency in various forms of discourse:

1. Compose paragraphs with fullness and length;
2. Write in specific modes--<u>expressive</u> (role elaboration, description, narration, fictional story, poetry, journal or diary), <u>analytical</u> (report, directions, process, explanation),

persuasive (paragraph of opinion, *essay of opinion), applied writing (friendly letters, business letters, *forms);

*3. Compose paragraphs of fullness and length within the framework of the essay.

Students will develop sensitivity to diction:

1. Use similes and metaphors;
2. Employ rhythm and sound devices;
3. Recognize the denotative precision of a word;
4. Recognize the connotative power of a word;
5. Use concrete wording--specific nouns, verbs, modifiers;
6. Learn commonly confused words.

Students will know grammatical structures:

1. Identify the subject|predicate|object base of a sentence;
2. Identify additions of modifications to a base clause;
3. Recognize phrases and clauses;
*4. Embed adjective and adverb clauses;
*5 Embed phrases--adjective, appositive, participle.

Students will increase ability to use various syntactic structures:

1. Use complete sentences;
2. Compound parts;
3. Embed subordinate additions;
4. Identify and construct eight basic sentence patterns:
   N + V
   N + V + O
   N + V + IO + O
   N + BE V + PN
   N + BE V + PA
   N + BE V + ADV
   N + LV + PA
   N + V BECOME + PN;
5. Identify and construct syntactic transformations, including active and passive;
6. Vary sentence structures within a composition to achieve effect;
7. Use parallel structures--for items in a series;
*8. Use parallel structures within a paragraph.

Students will utilize the revision process:

1. Share written work with peers;
2. Evaluate word choice and make necessary changes;
3. Add details to clarify meaning;
4. Delete irrelevant material;
5. Experiment with sentence lengths and structures;
6. Restructure for coherence;
7. Maintain chosen point of view;
8. Use good handwriting in making a final copy;
*9. Use an appropriate tone for the intended audience;
*10. Maintain an appropriate tone throughout a written piece;
*11. Avoid excessive compounding.

Students will proofread their own work and that of peers:

1. Correct punctuation errors;
2. Correct spelling errors;
3. Check for agreement errors;
4. Eliminate fragments and run-ons;
5. Check for shifts in tense;
6. Correct misplaced modifiers;
7. Eliminate manuscript errors.

II. OBJECTIVES FOR LITERATURE

Students will continue to develop good personal reading habits:

1. Evaluate personal reading;
2. Widen scope of reading to include greater diversity in content;
3. Expand vocabulary knowledge and usage.

Students will expand their literary awareness:

1. Know literary elements;
2. Experience a variety of literary genres;
3. Experience both classical and contemporary literature;
4. Explore culturally conscious literature.

Students will use literature to increase understanding of themselves and others:

1. Identify characters similar to themselves;

2. Recognize the commonality of human experience;
3. Perceive the uniqueness of individual experience;
4. Become aware of various models for development of morals and values;
5. Become acquainted with the past through literature.

Students will develop critical thinking skills:

1. Identify the author's purpose;
2. Note changes in a character throughout the story;
3. Identify literary techniques used within a story;
4. Identify poetic language;
5. Recognize and interpret colloquial expressions;
6. Draw conclusions based on evidence from the story;
7. Project possible outcomes beyond the scope of the story.

Students will respond creatively to literature:

1. Express personal opinions;
2. Share information;
3. Participate in creative follow-up activities (composition, art, oral interpretation, drama).

III. OBJECTIVES FOR RELATED AREAS--LIBRARY AND REFERENCE SKILLS

Students will use the resources of the library:

1. Know the division of fiction and nonfiction books in the library;
2. Locate books by the Dewey decimal system;
3. Identify and use the parts of a book (title page, copyright page, table of contents, preface/introduction, appendix, bibliography, glossary, index);
4. Use reference books--atlases, almanacs, encyclopedias, biographical dictionaries, and Readers' Guide;
5. Use the card catalogue as a tool for locating books;
6. Locate books and physical facilities in the library;
*7. Index specific items into general categories;
*8. Use all reference materials--telephone directories, building directories, catalogues, menus, newspapers, and other sources as outlined in the BEST objectives.

IV. OBJECTIVES FOR RELATED AREAS--THE DICTIONARY

Students will use dictionaries as tools for effective communication:

1. Find words through alphabetical sequence;
2. Use guide words;
3. Find the appropriate meaning of a word as used in context;
4. Understand the information in a given entry;
5. Recognize the parts of a dictionary;
6. Use a thesaurus, a special dictionary of synonyms for writers.

V. OBJECTIVES FOR RELATED AREAS--STUDY SKILLS

Students will know techniques to increase their efficiency as learners:

1. Make a formal outline;
2. Summarize written and oral information;
3. Take notes;
4. Follow directions, both oral and written;
5. Develop critical listening skills;
6. Use SQ3R (survey, question, read, recite, review) method;
7. Identify the main idea (stated or unstated) in a paragraph;
8. Identify details that support a main idea;
9. Know how to review for a test and to handle various test formats;
*10. Demonstrate the ability to interpret information in a graphic or pictorial manner.

VI. OBJECTIVES FOR RELATED AREAS--VOCABULARY/SPELLING

Students will expand their appreciation of and ability to use words:

1. Derive meaning from context;
2. Form new words with prefixes and suffixes;
3. Distinguish between words often misused;
4. Incorporate new vocabulary into their own speaking and writing;
5. Use specific diction;
6. Recognize and correct their own spelling problems.

VII. OBJECTIVES FOR RELATED AREAS--SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Students will increase their effectiveness in oral communication:

1. Participate in informal speaking situations (oral book reports, peer response to writing, panel discussions, dramatic oral readings, personal narratives, introductions,

demonstration speeches, speeches to convince, class discussions, researched speeches);

2. Speak audibly and distinctly;
3. Speak with acceptable usage in conversations and discussions;
4. State the main idea of an oral message;
5. Cite specific facts and details from oral messages;
6. Indicate changes in meaning by changing voice inflection;
7. Improve diction to replace overused words;
*8. Infer a speaker's point of view and purpose;
*9. Cite examples of fact, opinion, and opinion disguised as fact in oral work.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE CHART

The following chart shows the flow of concepts taught in the junior high school program and the degree of learning expected in these grades. An I represents introductory level; R, reinforcement level, and M, mastery level.

	7	8
PARTS OF SPEECH		
Nouns		
Identification	R	M
Proper	R	M
Common	R	M
Abstract	I	R
Concrete	I	R
Singular, Plural, Possessive	R	R
Verbs		
Identification	R	R
Transitive	I	R
Intransitive	I	R
Be	R	M
Linking	I	R
Auxiliary	R	R
Principal parts	I	R
Tenses	I	R
Pronouns		
Identification	R	R
Personal	R	M
Number	I	R
Gender	I	R
Case	I	R
Possessive	R	R
Demonstrative	I	R
Indefinite	I	R
Interrogative	I	R
Reflexive	I	R
Relative	I	R
Adjectives		
Identification	R	R
Determiners	R	M
Adverbs		
Identification	R	R
Intensifiers	I	R
Negatives	R	R

	7	8
Prepositions		
Identification	I	P
Prepositional phrases	I	R
Conjunctions		
Identification	R	R
Coordinating	R	M
Subordinating		I
Interjections		
Identification	R	M
SENTENCES		
Phrases	R	M
Clauses	I	R
Fragments	R	M
Run-togetners	R	R
Subjects		
Simple	R	M
Complete	R	M
Predicates		
Simple	R	M
Complete	R	M
Sentence patterns		
N + V (intransitive)	I	R
N + V + DO (transitive)	I	R
N + V + IO + DO	I	R
N + BE + PN	I	R
N + BE + PA	I	R
N + BE + ADV	I	R
N + LV + PA	I	R
N + BECOME + PN	I	R
Sentence structure		
Simple	R	M
Compound	R	M
Complex	I	R
Mixed types	I	R
Sentence transformations		
Yes/No questions	R	M
Informational questions	R	M
Negatives	R	M
Passives	I	R
Inverted	I	R
Expletives	I	R
Sentence expansion		
Adjectives	I	R
Appositives	I	R
Prepositional phrases	I	R
Participial phrases		I
Adjective clauses		I
Adverb clauses		I
Compounding	R	M
Absolutes		I
Free-floating modifiers		I

	7	8
USAGE		
Regular and irregular verbs	R	R
Confusing verb pairs	R	R
Subject-verb agreement	R	R
Pronoun-antecedent agreement	R	R
Case	I	R
Pronoun order	R	R
Comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives	R	R
Comparative and superlative degrees of adverbs	R	R
Double negatives	R	M
Troublesome adjective and adverb pairs	R	R
Troublesome prepositions	I	R
Troublesome conjunctions	I	R
Plural and possessive noun forms	R	R
MECHANICS		
Punctuation		
End punctuation	R	M
Commas		
Introductory words, phrases, clauses	I	R
Items in a series	R	M
Appositives	I	R
Participial phrases		I
Direct address		R
Parenthetical phrases	I	R
Compound sentences	R	M
Direct quotations	R	R
Addresses	R	R
Dates	R	R
Salutations of friendly letters	R	M
Complimentary closings	R	M
Sentence clarity	I	R
Adjective and adverb clauses		I
Semicolons		
Compound sentences	I	R
Items in a series		I
Colons		
Salutations of business letters	I	R
Introduction of lists	I	R
Numerical time	R	M
Quotation Marks		
Dialogue	R	R
Titles	I	R
Single quotation marks		I
Underlining		
Titles	I	R
Words used as words	I	R
Hyphens		
Syllabication	R	M
Compound numbers	I	R
Prefixes all- and self-	I	R
Compound words	I	R

	7	8
Dashes		
Distinction from hyphens		I
Lists before a pronoun subject		I
Comma pile up (clarification)		I
Apostrophes		
Possessives	R	R
Contractions	M	
Plurals of letters and numbers	I	R
Omitted letters	R	R
Capitalization		
First words in sentences	M	
First words in direct quotes	R	M
First words in lines of poetry	R	R
The pronoun I	M	
Salutations	R	M
Complimentary closes	R	M
Proper nouns	R	M
Proper adjectives	R	M
Titles of publications	R	M
Family relationships	R	R
Abbreviations	R	M
Calendar dates and seasons of the year	R	M
Diety and religions	R	R
Outline form	I	R
Nationalities and races	I	R
Organizations	I	R
Historical documents and events	I	R
Place names	R	R
Geographical locations and directions	R	R
Classifications	I	R
School subjects	I	R
Penmanship skills (Mastery should occur at the elementary level.)		
LIBRARY AND REFERENCE SKILLS		
Fiction and nonfiction books	R	M
Arrangement of library facilities	M	
Dewey decimal system	R	R
Parts of a book		
Title page	M	
Copyright page	M	
Table of contents	M	
Preface/Introduction/Forward	M	
Appendix	M	
Bibliography	M	
Glossary	M	
Index	M	
Card Catalogue		
Subject cards	R	M
Author cards	R	M
Title cards	R	M

	7	8
Reference books and materials		
Atlases	I	R
Almanacs	I	R
Encyclopedias	R	M
Biographical dictionaries	I	R
READERS' GUIDE TO PERIODICAL LITERATURE	I	R
Newspapers	I	R
Telephone directories		I
Building directories		I
Catalogues		I
Menus		I
Other BEST-related materials		I
Research methods		
Primary sources		I
Secondary sources		I
Use of indexes in other content areas		I
DICTIONARY		
Alphabetical sequence	M	
Word meanings		
Denotation	I	R
Connotation	I	R
Parts of a dictionary	I	R
Guide words	R	M
Dictionary entries		
Pronunciation	R	R
Etymology	I	R
Definitions	R	R
Synonyms and antonyms	R	R
Parts of speech	R	R
Idiomatic usage	I	R
Thesaurus	I	R
READING SKILLS		
Word recognition techniques (Mastery should be attained at elementary level.)		
Main idea	R	R
Supporting ideas	R	R
Sequencing	R	M
Fact/opinion	I	R
Skimming	R	R
Scanning	R	R
Inferences	I	R
Graphs and maps	R	R
Study skills		
Outlining	I	R
Notetaking	I	R
Footnoting		I
Bibliography form		I
Summarizing	I	R
Directions	R	R

	7	8
SQ3R	I	R
Test-taking skills		
Review of material	R	R
Objective questions	R	R
Essay questions	I	R
LITERARY ELEMENTS		
Setting		
Location (place)	R	R
Time	R	R
Lifestyle of character	R	R
Mood	I	R
Plot		
Climax	I	R
Resolution	I	R
Foreshadowing	I	R
Flashback	I	R
Suspense	R	R
Detail	R	R
Irony	I	R
Conflict (internal and external)		
Man vs man	I	R
Man vs nature	I	R
Man vs himself	I	R
Man vs the supernatural	I	R
Characterization		
Physical description	R	M
Speech	R	M
Actions	R	M
Thoughts	R	R
Reactions and opinions of others	I	R
Stereotyping	I	R
Point of view		
First person	I	R
Stream of consciousness	I	R
Personal narrative	I	R
Third person	I	R
Objective	I	R
Omniscient	I	R
Theme	I	R
Style		
Imagery	R	R
Simile	I	R
Metaphor	I	R
Personification	R	R
Alliteration	I	R
Onomatopoeia	I	R
Rhyme	R	R
Rhythm	R	R
Hyperbole	I	R
Symbolism	I	R
Allusion		I
Paradox		I

	7	8
Tone	I	R
Dialogue	R	R
Sentence length and structure	I	R
LITERARY GENRES		
Short story	R	R
Play	R	R
Novel	I	R
Poetry	R	R
Essay	I	R
Autobiography	R	R
Biography	R	R
Myth, legend, and folklore	R	R
VOCABULARY		
Context clues	R	R
Pronunciation	R	R
Prefixes	R	R
Suffixes	R	R
Misused words	R	R
Multiple meanings	R	R
Synonyms	R	M
Antonyms	R	M
Homonyms	R	M
Specific word choice	I	R
Spelling reinforcement	R	R
Levels of language		
Formal	I	R
Informal	I	R
Slang	I	R
SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS		
Voice		
Audibility	I	R
Distinctness	I	R
Inflection	I	R
Gestures	I	R
Eye Contact	I	R
Use of notes	I	R
Word Choice	I	R
Interpretation of oral directions	R	R
Identification from an oral presentation		
Main idea	I	R
Facts and details	I	R
Purpose	I	R
Point of view	I	R
Fact/opinion	I	R
Specific types of oral communication		
Class discussions	I	R
Introductions		I

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Oral reports	R	R
Peer response groups	I	R
Panel discussions	I	
Oral interpretations	I	R
Demonstration speeches		I
Speeches to convince		I
Personal narratives		I
Researched speeches		I

COMPOSITIONS

Writing process		
Prewriting	I	R
Composing	I	R
Revision	I	R
Proofreading	I	R
Prewriting skills		
Observations	I	R
Fact/opinion	I	R
Selection of detail	I	R
Point of view	I	R
Audience	I	R
Organizational methods	I	R
Form/content relationship	I	R
Symbolic nature of language	I	R
Sensory awareness	I	R
Specific word choice	I	R
Levels of language usage	I	R
Connotative power of words	I	R
Paragraph building		
Form and length	R	M
Newspaper	I	R
Dialogue	I	R
Selection and narrowing of topic	I	R
Paragraph patterns		
Chain		I
Coordinate		I
Subordinate		I
Topic sentences		
Beginning	I	R
Middle	I	R
End	I	R
Selection of details	I	R
Unity	I	R
Methods of development		
Process	I	R
Reasons	I	R
Details	I	R
Examples	I	R
Comparison/contrast		I
Combined methods		I
Coherence	I	R

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Transitional devices	I	R
Organizational patterns		
Chronological	I	R
Spatial	I	R
Logical	I	R
Climactic	I	R
Psychological		I
Repetition		I
Pronoun usage		I
Expressive mode		
Free writing	I	R
Journal/diary entries	I	R
Fictional stories		
Types	I	R
Characterization	I	R
Plot	I	R
Point of view	I	R
Audience	I	R
Form	I	R
Plot reversal	I	R
Characterization reversal		I
Flashback		I
Role elaboration	I	R
Narration	I	R
Description	I	R
Poetry		
Haiku	I	R
Limerick	I	R
Other form poetry	I	R
Concrete	I	R
Other poetry forms	I	R
Analytic mode		
Directions, oral and written		
Imperative sentences	I	R
Specific detail	I	R
Transitions	I	R
Maps and graphs	I	R
Process paragraphs		
Introduction	I	R
Preparation	I	R
Process	I	R
Results	I	R
Explanation		
Selection of topic	I	R
Introduction	I	R
Transitions	I	R
Between sentences	I	R
Between paragraphs		I
Appositives as clarifying tools		I
Reports		
Book reports	R	R
Comprehension skills	R	R

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Personal response to literature	I	R
Evaluation techniques	I	R
Use of literary terminology	I	R
Form--multi-paragraph composition	I	R
Researched reports		I
Evaluation of source material		I
Selection of topic		I
Notetaking		I
Bibliography form		I
Footnote use and form		I
Organization of paper		I
Persuasive mode		
Review of writing skills	I	R
Fact/opinion	I	R
Topic selection	I	R
Support material	I	R
Reasons	I	R
Facts	I	R
Examples	I	R
Expert testimony		I
Research methods		I
Paragraph of opinion	I	R
Topic sentence	I	R
Selection of detail	I	R
Transition devices	I	R
Clincher sentence		I
Essay of opinion		I
Planning		I
Thesis statement		I
Organization		I
Introduction		I
Body		I
Conclusion		I
Applied writing		
Friendly letters	R	M
Purpose	R	M
Voice	R	M
Tone	R	M
Content	R	M
Organization	R	M
Correct form	R	M
Types		
Social note	R	M
Thank-you note	R	M
Invitation	R	M
Appreciation	R	M
Business letters	I	R
Purpose	I	R
Criticism		I
Tone	I	R
Selection of detail	I	R
Organization	I	R

	7	8
Correct form		
Letter	I	R
Envelope	I	R
Types		
Complaint		I
Informational	I	R
Forms		I
Revision		
Peer response to writing	I	R
Unity	I	R
Coherence	I	R
Specific diction	I	R
Syntactic fluency and variety	I	R
Proofreading		
Spelling	I	R
Usage	I	R
Mechanics	I	R
Publication		
Penmanship	R	R
Distribution	R	R

THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

WRITING

Evaluation is usually viewed as assigning letter grades to students' work. However, evaluation is also a tool for placing students, selecting instructional materials, and comparing individual and group performance. Evaluations which advance students' writing ability may not involve conventional grades at all.

For writing evaluation to be valid, it must use samples of students' actual writing. Many tests in the past measured correct labeling of language or recognition of errors. While these skills are important, they are actually editorial or proofreading skills. They are not good indicators of writing growth.

Writing samples should be judged on criteria appropriate to the grade level of the students and the mode of discourse produced. Critical thinking skills, students' ability to respond to an assignment in a clearly elaborated and organized manner, should weigh heavily in evaluation instruments.

To judge student growth in writing, teachers will use diagnostic, formative, and summative evaluations. They will use pre- and post writing samples, similar in design and mode, judged through holistic rubrics. In holistic evaluation the teacher rates student papers according to a predetermined set of criteria, emphasizing content, but also considering grammatical principles. The numerical score for a paper should not be interpreted as a grade. Because numerical assessments are diagnostic or summative in nature, teachers should not feel compelled to do more than rate the papers according to the scoring guide. Students will receive copies of the guide to understand their papers' assessments.

At the start of the year, students will be given a diagnostic writing assignment. Teachers may use these writing samples to determine individual and class strengths in writing as a basis for further instruction.

During the year, teachers will use formative evaluation as an instructional tool to guide students in specific writing strategies and skills. These evaluations may take many forms: rubrics, holistic scoring, primary-trait scoring, peer response, written comments.

At the end of the year, students will be reevaluated in the same mode as the diagnostic test. This summative evaluation will use the same procedures and scoring guide as the pre-test. Thus, evaluation of student progress will be done in a consistent manner within the junior high schools.

Using the information gained through evaluation, emphasizing critical thinking skills, and integrating grammatical principles as aids to clear communication, teachers will be able to help students understand the complex nature of written discourse and to improve their abilities to communicate effectively through the written word.

LITERATURE

The purpose of evaluation in literature is not only to ascertain how well the student has mastered literary skills but also to provide learning experiences that broaden the student's abilities to communicate and to integrate the material studied. Evaluating student achievement in literature is complicated because values, attitudes, and appreciation are more intangible than facts and information and, thus, more difficult to assess.[1] Publishing companies often provide objective tests to follow their literature units. These tests give teachers one tool to assess student achievement. However, since the study of literature involves a variety of levels of understanding, teachers should use assessment tools beyond literal questioning to measure student progress. (See "Methodology--Aids to Instruction" in this Guide for a more complete discussion of levels of literary analysis.) The evaluation of literature is an on-going process which may involve not only end-of-unit tests but also class discussions, written responses to essay questions, individual and group projects, and other creative activities.

TESTING COMPONENTS

LANGUAGE ARTS SKILLS

IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS (ITBS). Administered in the spring of the school year, this test measures student progress in the areas of vocabulary, usage, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, reading comprehension, and reference materials against national norms.

BASIC ESSENTIAL SKILLS TEST (BEST). Administered in March of the school year, this state-developed test for eighth-graders measures minimum student competencies in language skills as needed in everyday life.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL WRITING ASSESSMENT. Administered in the fall and spring quarters of the school year, these writing samples serve as diagnostic and summative tools to assess student progress in writing ability.

DISTRICT WRITING ASSESSMENT

DISTRICT ASSESSMENT OF THE JUNIOR HIGH WRITING PROGRAM. The Curriculum Office--Language Arts will use pre- post numerical scores to assess the impact of the new junior high writing program on the learner. These scores will be forwarded to the Curriculum Office by department chairpersons following administration of fall and spring assessments.

DESIGN OF THE WRITING ASSESSMENT. Pre- and post writing topics focus on critical thinking skills. Students write whole pieces of discourse for a significant purpose--expression or explanation or persuasion.

Example 7th Grade Assignment:

Purpose: Expression of feeling through narration of a personal experience

A. Think about a time when you were especially happy. Tell what happened and why the experience had a special meaning for you. Write about that time as if you were writing in a diary or personal journal.

B. Think about a time when you were disappointed. Tell what happened and why the experience was important to you. Write about that time as if you were writing in a diary or personal journal.

Example 8th Grade Assignment:

Purpose: Explanation through significant ordering of detail

A. One of the things you do in school is to write reports for science, social studies, and other subjects. Imagine that you are going to write a report about the moon for your science class. In the box below are some facts about the moon which you can use in your report. You may also add other facts that you remember about the moon from your reading and classwork, from television, or from listening to people. Write your report as you would tell it to your class. Be sure to report the facts in an order that will be clear and that will make sense.

FACTS ABOUT THE MOON
a natural satellite of the earth surface of jagged mountains, craters, and rocks no air, no water, no living creatures 240 thousand miles from the earth closest heavenly body to the earth gravitational pull creates the tides of earth's seas and oceans

reached by mankind on July 20, 1969
swings around the earth in a little less than one month
illuminated by the sun
Neil Armstrong, commander of Apollo 11, the first man to walk on the moon
craters originally produced by impact of meteorites

B. One of the things you do in school is to write reports for science, social studies, and other subjects. Imagine that you are going to write a report about the sun for your science class. In the box below are some facts about the sun which you can use in your report. You may also add other facts that you remember about the sun from your reading and classwork, from television, or from listening to people. Write your report as you would tell it to your class. Be sure to report the facts in an order that will be clear and that will make sense.

FACTS ABOUT THE SUN

a star
a great nuclear reaction
made of hot gas
93 million miles from the earth
nearer than any other star
radiates heat waves from its surface
central temperature about 25 million degrees
travels in an ecliptic path
will keep burning for eight billion years
surface temperature about 10 thousand degrees
mainly hydrogen gas, the lightest chemical element

ADMISISTRATION OF THE WRITTEN ASSESSMENT. The following procedures will be followed for the fall and spring writing assessments:

Pre-test

1. The fall junior high writing topics will be given to students during the third week of the school year;
2. A full class period will be used for the writing;
3. As prewriting instruction students should be reminded of (1) legible handwriting, (2) the preference of pen, (3) neatness, and (4) the composing of a first draft and the completion of a final copy. No other prewriting instruction should be given.
4. A dictionary, thesaurus, or grammar book may be used by students;
5. Students will be held to the time constrictions of the test period. Unfinished papers will be judged on the merits of both the first draft and the unfinished copy.

Posttest

1. The same procedures as used for the pre-test will be used for the posttest;

2. The posttest will be given three full weeks prior to the closing of school.

Teachers will place both the scoring guide and the evaluated copies of the pre- and post writings in students' cumulative writing folders.

SUMMARY OF NUMERICAL ASSESSMENT CATEGORIES. Student papers are assigned a score based on four distinct numerical categories having precise qualitative definitions. Distractions to the reader such as grammatical errors and sentence structures are also taken into account in evaluating papers.

Example 7th Grade Scoring Guide:

4 = VIVID AND CONSISTENT NARRATION. Papers assigned to this category present a vivid and consistent narration that clearly establishes the meaning of the personal experience for the writer. The emotions will be strongly conveyed to the reader through the use of selective details. These papers contain no lapses or irrelevancies. They contain few, if any, errors.

3 = CONSISTENT NARRATION. Compositions in this category use sufficient details to clearly relate the narration, but do not fully establish the importance of the personal experience. Although the meaning is implied, it is not fully integrated throughout the narrative. These compositions may contain a few passages of irrelevant details, of mere fact lacking in expressive purpose, of highly generalized information, or brief changes and shifts away from the dominant emotion. Overall, writings in this category are less consistent, concrete, or appropriate in elaboration than category 4 papers. These papers may contain a few errors distracting to the reader.

2 = NARRATION OF EXPERIENCE. Writings in this category express the narrative experience, but do not reveal its importance to the writer through selective details. Instead, the writer simply states the significance before or after writing the story. Other papers establish a personal narration but give it no meaning or express no feelings toward the event. They may include some irrelevant details, or are inconsistent, revealing a contradictory attitude on the writer's part. These papers contain a number of errors distracting to the reader.

1 = POOR NARRATION OF EXPERIENCE. Student papers assigned to this category lack the fundamental purpose of the assignment; that is, they give a narrative but it is not a personal experience or it is so vague as not to convey the meaning or significance of the event. These papers may ramble, covering irrelevant aspects or they may fail to develop the topic sufficiently. They are marked by many errors distracting to the reader.

0 = OTHER PAPERS. These papers do not fit the categories for various reasons, for example, blank papers or papers totally on another subject.

Example 8th Grade Scoring Guide:

4 = SYSTEMATIC EXPLANATION OF DETAIL THROUGH AN OVERALL PRINCIPLE OF UNITY AND DEVELOPMENT. These papers are distinguished by the presence of an overall principle of unity in terms of which they select, order, connect, and expand facts and ideas, so as to produce a totally coherent and developed explanation. The unifying strategy may be narrative, thematic, analytic, or comparative. Whatever the strategy, it pervades the paper, and serves not only to connect individual bits of information one to another, but also to set them all within the context of an overarching framework for understanding the subject matter. These papers contain few, if any, errors.

3 = EXPLANATORY ORDER OF DETAIL, BUT WITHOUT AN OVERALL PRINCIPLE OF UNITY AND DEVELOPMENT. These papers are distinguished by the fact that they discuss several topics, one or more of which they explain at length, by selecting, ordering, expanding, and connecting related material, so as to produce extended explanations. But the several topics are not linked to one another, nor are they related to one another through an overall principle of unity and development. Some of these papers develop two or three main topics; others develop only one topic which dominates the paper. Both types are likely to have points at which they drift into isolated details, irrelevant facts, or brief clusters. Neither type achieves the total unification of material to be found in category 4 papers. These papers may contain a few errors distracting to the reader.

2 = SOME EXPLANATORY ORDERING OF DETAIL. These papers are characterized by a tendency to group and connect facts or ideas in small clusters containing two or three bits of related information. Some of these papers are made up almost entirely of such groupings. Others waver between small explanatory groupings and mere listing but, even in these pieces, at least 50 per cent of the composition consists of connected clusters of information. In both types, the writing moves abruptly from one cluster or bit of information to the next with little or no evidence of transition. Overall, then, these papers offer a series of rudimentary explanations. These papers contain a number of errors distracting to the reader.

1 = NO EXPLANATORY ORDERING OF DETAIL. These papers are dominated by disjunctive listings of disparate facts and ideas with little or no explanation of those facts and ideas. Some papers are relatively brief, consisting only of one or two statements, but they are rateable if they report information about the object. Others offer moderate to lengthy listings of facts, but again in unconnected sentences that record information in random order. Still others move slightly beyond disconnected reporting to include one or two bits of related information, but these few connected bits are slight in proportion to the rest of the piece, which is characterized by the tendency to report disparate facts in random order without explanation. These papers are marked by many errors distracting to the reader.

0 = OTHER PAPERS. These papers do not fit the categories for various reasons, for example, blank papers or papers totally on another subject.

STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF PRE- AND POST WRITING ASSESSMENT. The Curriculum Office will compare scores for indications of significant gains, reflecting students' growth in writing. Data will be correlated to measure (1) seventh- and eighth-grade level variance, (2) fall to spring gains, (3) and grade-level performance to determine annual district growth.

CUMULATIVE WRITING FOLDERS. These folders provide a profile of secondary students' progress in composition from grades seven through ten. Thus, they serve to establish a continuity between the junior high and senior high Language Arts programs. More important, the folders, continued from year to year, serve as a record of students' long range growth in writing skills.

Folder Contents

The folders will contain the following papers:

1. Pre- and post essays written in the seventh and eighth grades;
2. One piece of writing per semester, selected by the student with the help of the teacher, that he/she considers his/her best effort for the year;
3. Any special pieces of writing, works in progress, that show promise for writing competitions such as the Scholastic Writing Awards or the NCTE Achievement Awards.

The Cumulative Writing Folders, a chronicle of intellectual growth, will be given to students upon completion of the tenth grade.

METHODOLOGY--AIDS TO INSTRUCTION

WRITING

Research indicates that writing as a communication process is learned and improved through practice. Encouraging students to write frequently and for varying purposes, to experiment with language, to write for different audiences, and to learn through writing can be enjoyable and rewarding for teachers and students alike. Certainly the mechanical aspects of writing--spelling, punctuation, and grammar--are of importance; however, research and data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have shown that students' weaknesses lie in the areas of organizing their writing, using effective transitions, and improving their work through revision. Errors in grammar and mechanics are usually not made randomly; such mistakes indicate progress showing that students are trying out new, more complex and sophisticated language.

Integration of a comprehensive writing program into the classroom can be accomplished through activities that teach specific skills and techniques in a manageable sequence. The following list provides suggestions toward this end.

Prewriting Activities:

Create a climate for writing;

Discuss the parts of the writing process (prewriting, composing, and revision) with the class;

Explore ideas for writing with students, e.g., use talk-write activities or develop inventory lists of topics;

Conduct short warm-up exercises in writing, e.g., games of writing roulette or bio-poems, designs for coats of arms or license plates, interviews of classmates;

Introduce students to revision through modeling, e.g., the polishing of a paper on an overhead projector or role playing a writing conference, through sharing work in peer partnerships or class sentence-combining exercises.

Developing Sensitivity to Diction:

Direct students' attention to word choices in peer response activities, e.g., "Star ★ the best word in the paper," "Put a tension line ~~~~ under a word that you don't like," "Brainstorm related words";

Acquaint students with the nature of a symbol;

Introduce figurative language through personification exercises, e.g.,

Trust is everybody's friend. Few could live without her friendship. Or sports writing from newspapers, e.g., Bears Maul Chiefs;

Have students prepare a single, long sentence which attempts to capture in the sound of the sentence the actual pace of the event, e.g., the gradual slowing down of a train arriving at the station.

Grammatical and Syntactic Structures:

Give an overview of the grammatical system (the eight parts of speech and structural elements);

Focus on basic concepts:

a. the subject | predicate | object base of a sentence,
b. the addition of modification to a base clause,
c. the principle of compounding,
d. the punctuation for a compound sentence;

Use signaled sentence combining to reinforce punctuation skills;

Direct students' attention to the natural order of sentence syntax, e.g., have students focus on the word order in sc exercises, mark off subject predicate openers in prose models, or watch for awkward sentences (pretzel prose) during peer response work;

Introduce students to parallelism;

Show students how to add free-floating modifiers to a sentence base.

Paragraph Construction:

Introduce students to the three main modes of writing--expressive, persuasive, and analytical--in which they will become skilled;

Discuss varying paragraph lengths with the class:

Relate the principle of general-to-particular organization to the topic sentence and supporting details of a paragraph;

Analyze a number of paragraph models with students, e.g., using an overhead projector, using dittoed copies, using student models, using peer response groups;

Possibly find it helpful to teach coordinate and subordinate sentence patterns before teaching chain, coordinate, and subordinate paragraph patterns to eighth graders;

Expand writing in expressive mode by follow-up assignments to elaboration of role pre-test, e.g., have students role play another familiar object. Invite them to take part in choosing the object or develop a short list of three or four classroom objects;

Have students write explanatory paragraphs on topics from other content areas to reinforce the analytic mode;

Ask each peer group to write one essay of opinion, the group dividing the paragraph--introduction, body, and conclusion--among themselves to reinforce the persuasive mode.

Revision:

Guide students toward re-vision, seeing anew the content of their first drafts;

Direct students in peer work to respond positively, to encourage student writers with praise;

Show students how to be good editors by nudging the writer toward elaboration of details, toward specificity of wording, toward shifting structural parts;

Have students devise short rubrics of specific skills called for in an assignment;

Have students make written comments in response to writing on final drafts;

Stress editorial polishing, rather than correcting, of final drafts;

Encourage students to use standard editorial symbols for marking conventional errors;

Give presence to students' finished drafts, e.g., by displaying papers on bulletin boards, by making copies of the best papers for class distribution.

LITERATURE

The objectives of the literature program reinforce listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Literature is also an integral part of humanities teaching and relates to art and music.[2] The multitext-approach program affords students opportunities to explore individual interests as well as learn concerns common to man. Good literature, well presented, helps develop imagination, provides vicarious experiences, and gives insight into human behavior.[3] The following list provides suggestions toward this end.

Audio-Visual Materials:

Teachers should consult the audio-visual guides from the Cooperating School Districts and the St. Louis County Library for material suggestions. Each resource should be previewed in advance to ascertain suitability of the material for the class and preparation needed to insure the class benefits from the source.

Discussion Techniques:

Teachers can assist in enjoyment and understanding by asking probing questions about the material.[4] Class discussion allows students to share information, learn from others, and react to various levels of literary analysis. Teachers may use the following six levels of questioning:

1. Literal questions refer to the who, what, when, and where of a story. (Most students are familiar with this level of questioning.) Literal questions should not only focus on specifics but also include broader aspects of the work.

2. Interpretive questions deal with the how's and why's of a work. These questions allow students to determine theme, mood, and tone and understand the way in which the literary elements in a story interrelate.

3. Evaluative questions allow students to make judgments about the purpose, content, style, and ethic of a selection. Teachers need to encourage students to support their opinions with evidence from the story.

4. Reactive questions let students begin to "own" a piece of literature. Different readers react differently to the same selection. Teachers need to be sensitive to individual reactions.

5. Integrative questions allow students to assimilate literature in terms of their personal experience. (What does the book mean in the reader's life?) In order for students to answer integrative questions, they must recognize the relevancy of the selection to their own lives.

6. Creative questions allow students to synthesize what they learn by utilizing it in new contexts. These questions often take the form of follow-up activities and projects relating to a selection.

Teachers should not try to use all six levels of questioning with each piece of literature. Instead, in building their discussion skills, teachers should introduce these levels over a period of time. Students will learn that often there is not one right answer to a question and that their answers depend on supporting their ideas.

ADDITIONAL MOTIVATIONAL ACTIVITIES

(Students may be encouraged to participate in various building and district activities which promote recognition of their accomplishments in Language Arts. These activities may vary from building to building based on student and teacher interest and should be completely voluntary.)

Young Authors' Conferences;

Literary magazines;

Newspapers;

Yearbooks;

Spelling bees;

Academic Olympics;

Science and Arts Fairs;

Local, state, and national writing contests such as the Scholastic Writing Awards;

Oratorical contests;

Missouri State Reading Circle Certificates;

Book fairs;

Sustained silent reading;
Storytelling;
Creative dramatics.

TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Grade 7

Basic Texts:

Composition Skills 1
Science Research Associates, 1980.

Warriner's English Grammar and Composition, First Course
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1982.

Wordskill 1
Science Research Associates, 1979.

Basic Skills in English, Book One
McDougal, Littell, 1980. (Remedial Text)

Adventures for Readers, Book One
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979.

Introduction to Literature
Ginn, 1978.

Scholastic Literature Units

Novels (as determined by individual buildings)

Supplementary Texts:

Sentence Combining, A Composing Book
Random House, 1973.

Grade 8

Basic Texts:

Composition Skills 2
Science Research Associates, 1980.

Warriner's English Grammar and Composition, Second Course
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982.

Wordskill 2
Science Research Associates, 1979.

Real Life Reading Skills
Scholastic, 1977, 1981.

Basic Skills in English, Book Two
McDougal, Littell, 1980. (Remedial Text)

Adventures for Readers, Book Two
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979.

The Study of Literature
Ginn, 1978.

Scholastic Literature Units

Novels (as determined by individual buildings)

Supplementary Texts:

Sentence Combining, A Composing Book
Random House, 1973.

Dictionaries for the Junior High Schools

Intermediate Dictionary (and workbook). Scott Foresman, 1979.
For Buerkle Junior High and Oakville Junior High.

Advanced Dictionary (and workbook). Scott Foresman, 1979.
For Oakville Junior High.

Webster's Intermediate Dictionary (and workbook). Ginn, 1980.
For Washington Junior High.

Webster's High School Dictionary (and workbook). Ginn, 1980.
For Washington Junior High.

FOOTNOTES

1. A Guide for Children's Literature K-8, p. 13.
2. Ibid., p. 8.
3. Ibid., p. 8.
4. Ibid., p. 13.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RESOURCES

All About Letters. NCTE and the U.S. Postal Service, 1979, 1982.

(This useful guide provides (1) introductions to large information banks such as the Government Printing Office and the Consumer Information Center; (2) descriptions of available postal services from classes of mail to procedures for sending valuables; and (3) samples and "how to" advice for writing everything from job letters to letters to the editor, from letters to colleges to consumer letters.)

Basic Reading Skills for Missouri Students. Jefferson City, Missouri: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1977.

(This guide lists criterion-referenced competency skills for reading.)

Buckley, Marilyn Hanf and Owen Boyle. Mapping the Writing Journey. BAWP Curriculum Publication No. 15. California: Berkeley, 1981.

(This monograph describes and illustrates a new tool for teachers--cognitive mapping. An alternative to the formal outline, a map is a prewriting activity, an intellectual blueprint, a mnemonic device, and a graphic outline in one.)

Carter, Candy and Zora Rashkis (eds.). Ideas for Teaching English in the Junior High and Middle School. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1980.

(This outstanding collection provides activities related to particular curriculum objectives. The "Writing" section gives many lesson plans--Rock or Story Starters or Object Obituaries--that encourage student writers to use specific wording. See also such activities as "Nonsense Parts of Speech," "Parts-of-Speech Relay," and "Madeasentencethat makessense!")

Christensen, Francis. Notes Toward a New Rhetoric. New York: Harper & Row, 1967.

(Christensen shows the cumulative sentence, a base clause plus free-floating modifiers, to be a major sentence structure of modern English prose.)

Christensen, Francis. The Sentence and the Paragraph. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1966.

(Analyzing the prose style of major twentieth-century writers, Christensen shows that their practices conflict with the advice given to students in traditional grammar books, particularly on sentence openers.)

Donelson, Ken and Alleen Pace Nilsen. Literature for Today's Young Adults. Illinois: Scott Foresman, 1980.

(This book is the most comprehensive reference to young adult literature, including history, themes, and contempory authors.)

Elbow, Peter. Writing With Power. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

(Elbow's list of suggestions--"Do a free writing on the piece of writing and give it to the writer," "Describe the color of the writing," "Whom would you cast as the star if this essay were a movie script?"--is especially useful for having students write responses back to the writer.)

A Guide for Children's Literature K-8. Jefferson City, Missouri: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1980.

(This Guide, a resource book for teachers, suggests objectives, activities, and evaluation criteria for planning a literature program; it contains sample lesson plans and a list of books and poetry for children at various grade levels.)

Healy, Mary K. Using Student Writing Response Groups in the Classroom. BAWP Curriculum Publication No. 12. California: Berkeley, 1980.

(Mary K. Healy presents her experiences teaching seventh- and eighth-grade students to work in small groups in order to respond to one another's writing; outlines steps to make response groups succeed; and discusses how to handle problems that may occur when teachers first begin to use the method.)

Hillocks, George. Observing and Writing. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1975.

(Activities involve students in observing and recording specific details.)

Klaus, Carl H. Composing Adolescent Experience: An Approach to Writing and Learning in the Junior High School Grades. St. Louis: CEMREL, Inc., 1982.

(This guide explains the use of primary-trait scoring by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), offers suggestions for the use of PTS as a teaching tool as well as for evaluation, and gives several practice sections to familiarize teachers with scoring procedures.)

Schwartz, Shelia. Teaching Adolescent Literature: A Humanistic Approach. Rochelle Park, New Jersey: Hayden Book Co., 1979.

(This book presents thematic approaches to adolescent literature: minorities, teenagers and sex, violence, family lifestyles, science fiction as prophecy, the outsiders, regions and locales.)

Wood, Grant. American Gothic. Language Arts Department.

(Color print and guide for eighth grade.)

A Writing Guide for Missouri Schools K-12. Jefferson City, Missouri: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1979.

(This Guide gives many ideas for peer response as well as explains types of evaluative procedures to ease the paper load.)

Copies of the Junior High Curriculum Guide to Language Arts are available:

Curriculum Office--Language Arts
Mehlville R-9 School District
3120 Lemay Ferry Road
St. Louis, Missouri 63125